



CITY OF HAYWARD

AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 03/23/04

AGENDA ITEM _____

WORK SESSION ITEM WS#2

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Director of Community and Economic Development

SUBJECT: Design of Proposed Cinema Place Project

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council review and comment on this report.

DISCUSSION:

Blake Hunt Venture has commenced designing the Cinema Place Project. The City is in receipt of preliminary drawings of the complex, and staff is seeking comments from the Council about the design. The comments provided by the Council will guide staff and the developer in refining the design for their critical project. The purpose of this work session is limited to the design of the project. Other issues may arise in the course of this review which will be addressed in a subsequent meeting.

Along the B Street and Foothill Boulevard frontages, the complex features commercial activity on the ground floor. The second floor will accommodate additional commercial establishments (most likely restaurants) and the theater. The height of the greater part of the complex is 61 feet, which is necessary to accommodate the second floor location of the theater and its stadium-type seating. In order to provide architectural interest and to break up the bulk of the building, the lobby area of the theater extends an additional 11 feet above the main roofline near the center of the building to create a rotunda. A multi-story parking structure is located to the rear of the complex, with frontage on Foothill Boulevard and C Street.

The contemporary design of the theater/retail complex incorporates many aspects of the Art Deco/Modern architectural styles. The most dramatic and inviting elevation faces B Street. Noteworthy features include a grand staircase that provides access from B Street to the second floor and directly to the theater lobby visually defined by the rotunda. The windows that mark the entry to the theater lobby are significant and create a striking entrance feature to the theater which is visible from B Street. The lobby forms the tallest portion of the complex, and the exterior neon lighting on this wall is intended to create a beacon for entertainment in the downtown. There is a modest decorative band that forms a cornice about the roof structure of the remaining portion of the complex. Decorative neon horizontal lighting adds interest on the west side of the B Street elevation; and there are colorful, vertical banners and a waist-high decorative metal barrier with a wave pattern on the second level of this elevation which further provide appeal. The design is intended to appeal both to motorists in that the larger architectural features will be visible for some distance and to pedestrians in that the ground floor storefronts feature decorative bulkheads and transom windows, reminiscent of many of the older Downtown buildings. A horizontal band

extends between the storefront windows and the transom windows upon which signs may be located. An escalator provides additional access to the second floor from B Street, and there is a space for movie posters adjacent to the escalator. The drawings indicate a scored pattern on the bulk of the walls; however, typical score lines as a rule, lack the drama of the wider, more striking horizontal lines found with Art Deco-ish facades. For this reason, staff recommends that the building incorporate wider horizontal lines that differ in color from the base of the building, which would serve to both add interest and reduce the appearance of height. A wider cornice would also help to add interest and “ground” the building. The building is rounded at the corner of B Street and Foothill Boulevard, and staff believes that a moderately rounded corner at the western end of the building at B Street would create additional interest by furthering the Art-Deco look and by moderating the bulkiness of the large structure.


The Foothill Boulevard elevation features storefronts on the ground floor for the major portion of this elevation. The storefronts are attractive and complement those found along the ground floor of the B Street elevation. The remaining portion of this elevation is more austere than the B Street frontage. An architectural element (horizontal band) which incorporates accent lighting is indicated above the storefronts, and decorative neon horizontal lighting that complements the lighting on the B Street façade helps to break up the massiveness of the building. The rotunda that sits back some distance from Foothill and that identifies the lobby area is visible from Foothill, and attractive and dramatic decorative neon lighting on this section of wall is indicated. As with the B Street frontage, score lines are intended to break up the massiveness of the appearance of the building; and, again, staff would recommend that these score lines be replaced with more prominent horizontal lines painted in a color that contrasts with the base color. Rounded corners would also soften the bulkiness of the building as viewed from Foothill. There is no marquee that is often associated with theaters, but a large theater identification sign projects out from the side of the Foothill Boulevard frontage. In staff’s opinion, the sign appears to be tacked onto the side of the building rather than incorporated into the architecture in any way, projects unnecessarily above the plane of the roof, and is generally lackluster in design. For consistency, the wave pattern shown on the B Street elevation should be incorporated in another area of the building, and this element could be exhibited on the Foothill Boulevard side.

In light of some of the comments expressed by some of the Downtown merchants, an alternative parking proposal has been developed to respond to their concerns. The first two levels are intended to provide parking for retailers, and the second two levels would serve theater patrons. This multi-use garage would be a joint venture between the City and the developer of the Cinema Place Project. As shown on the plans, a four-level parking structure (ground floor parking and three upper levels) is indicated along the Foothill Boulevard frontage, the scale of which is appropriate considering the height and size of the theater/retail complex. The four-level structure lessens the impact of the mass of the Cinema Place Project, and its size is in keeping with its downtown context. This would not be the case with the two-level parking structure initially envisioned. The lower level of the parking structure features movie posters in display cases. The design depicted, in staff’s opinion, lacks the interest found on the theater/retail complex and does not necessarily complement the complex since none of its interesting architectural features, such as the decorative wavy barrier, lighting, banners, etc., are used on the parking structure. Furthermore, the building materials of the parking structure differ. Because the parking structure is proposed for the prominent corner of Foothill Boulevard and C Street, the portion of the building at this corner (currently indicated as featuring a retail sign panel) should have a prominent, more interesting architectural feature. Although staff is supportive of the mass of the structure, additional attention should be paid to its design.

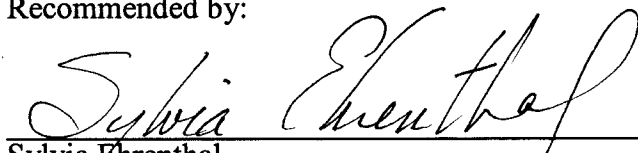
The western side of the theater/retail complex faces an alley separating it from the one-story Avalon jewelry store and the Herdon chiropractic clinic. The lower level of this elevation will be visible to motorists traveling from B Street to the parking structure. Trellises and landscaping is featured along the lower level of this elevation. The upper level of the building features horizontal neon lighting that wraps around the building from its B Street side; however, because of the height of the structure in relation to neighboring structures, its upper levels will be visibly prominent. Therefore, staff recommends that additional architectural interest be incorporated in the upper areas of this western elevation. One method could be enhanced score lines, interesting painted patterns, and ornate and exciting lighting fixtures that would splash attention-grabbing light patterns on the wall or create a wall wash.

From the C Street elevation, one would view the parking structure and the back of the theater/retail complex, including the raised rotunda. There is an opportunity on this elevation to create more interest on the body of the theater/retail complex. This might be accomplished simply by a larger, more defined cornice, an interesting paint pattern, and decorative lighting which casts interesting light patterns. The design of the parking structure along C Street should be improved, either by incorporating some of the interesting architectural features of the theater/retail complex or by designing a structure that gives the sense of a downtown office building.

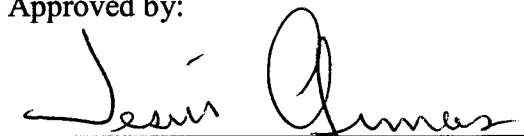
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Approved by:


Jesús Armas, City Manager

Attachments:

Architectural Plans
Aerial Map of Downtown Muni Parking Lots

3/17/04

**DUE TO THE LENGTH OR COLOR
OF THE REFERENCED EXHIBIT,
IT HAS BEEN ATTACHED AS A
SEPARATE LINK.**